Declaring a community as Primitive Tribal Group

535. SHRI O.T. LEPCHA: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of criteria fixed by Government for declaring a community as a Primitive Tribal Group in the country; and

(b) the steps/initiatives being taken by Government regarding recognition of the Lepcha tribe of Sikkim as a Primitive Tribal Group?

THE MINISTER OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI P.R. KYNDIAH): (a) The criteria fixed by the Government for declaring a community as a Primitive Tribal Group in the country are: (i) low level of literacy (ii) declining or stagnant population of the tribe (iii) pre-agricultural level of technology and (iv) economic backwardness.

(b) The proposal from the State Government of Sikkim regarding recognition of the Lepcha tribe of Sikkim as a Primitive Tribal Group is being examined as per the prescribed criteria.

ST status to various communities of Assam

536. SHRI SILVIUS CONDPAN: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state the steps taken by Government to grant Scheduled Tribe status to the Moran, Matak, Cochrajvanshi, Ahom, Chutia and tea workers community of Assam as per recommendation by the Assam Government?

THE MINISTER OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI P.R. KYNDIAH): The Government of Assam had recommended the proposals for inclusion of communities *viz.*, Koch Rajbangshi, Adivashi (tea tribes-number 97 communities), Matak, Moran, Ahom, and Chutia in the Scheduled Tribes list of Assam. These proposals have been processed as per modalities approved by the Government of India on 15.6.99 for deciding claims for inclusion in/exclusion from and other modifications in the orders specifying Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes. These modalities require reports from three independent agencies namely, the concerned State Government/ UT Administration, the Registrar General of India and the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes, about the fulfillment of the stipulated criteria by the community concerned. Only those proposals which have